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Red Defector Describes Hong Kong Recruiting

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(Written for the London Sunday Times)

TAIPEI, Aug. 26—A Hong Kong Communist leader who defected to Taiwan has described the organization behind the colony's anti-British violence and how it recruits rioters.

Wu Shu-tung, who reached Taiwan recently, was chairman of the propaganda section of Hong Kong's Anti-Persecution Struggle Committee. This, he said, was part of the story behind the Communist-led disorders.

The Struggle Committee, which directs the terrorist action, has received about $3 million from Peking through the Chinese National Labor Union. The Committee's 28 members have also raised more than that amount within Hong Kong.

The money is used to support the Committee's four sections, which are responsible for terrorism, smuggling and distribution of arms, tactical control, and propaganda.

The Committee recruits most of its agitators, rioters and terrorists from among those who are dismissed after unofficial strikes at factories, as in the case of the 186 workers at a British-owned artificial flower factory in Kowloon.

Communist officials at once offered to pay them $2.80 a day—roughly equivalent to their pay at the factory.

Then came the squeeze. Within a month the Communists cut the pay from $2.80 to $2.40, and finally wages were brought down to 35 cents. As the organizers had foreseen, many of the workers protested bitterly.

They were told that, if they moved into the Communist-owned Hua Feng department store, they would get free meals and lodging, and their pay would be raised to $1.75. Eventually 400 workers accepted the offer.

This squeeze technique enabled the Communist organizers to recruit 1700 workers, accommodated in other Communist-owned buildings, by July.

At this point the rumor was spread that, because of informers among them, many had been put on police blacklists. They were reassured that the Struggle Committee would protect them so long as they carried out orders. Disobedience would mean the threat of police arrest.

Now thoroughly hooked, the workers were invited to volunteer for acts of violence, for which they would be generously paid. Many felt they had no choice, and accepted orders to stab streetcar and bus drivers, throw bombs and commit arson.

According to Wu, even the most extreme groups in Hong Kong are now convinced that their successes in Macao, where the Portuguese colonial administration has many Communist demands capitulated to cannot be repeated in Hong Kong. But he predicts that the 1700 paid agitators, now jobless and desperate, are likely to carry out many more acts of violence before they can be brought under control.

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